

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 14 and 15 as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, now read as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A printing control apparatus which performs a printing process employing a plurality of printing devices, comprising:

a printing attribute acquisition unit configured to acquire ~~means for acquiring an~~ attribute of a printing job to be processed;

an adaptive environment determination unit configured to obtain ~~means for obtaining~~ device combinations capable of executing the printing job based on performance information representing at least performance of each of the plurality of printing devices and the acquired attribute of the printing job; and

a display unit configured to display a process flow list representing a process flow to execute the printing job by employing the device combinations.

wherein the process flow list is a list in which a plurality of procedures which constitute the printing job are listed in the order of execution, and wherein the plurality of procedures include ~~process flow presentation means for presenting a process flow required to execute the printing job, wherein the process flow includes work procedures to be performed by a user and process procedures to be performed by respective printing devices included in the device combinations obtained by said adaptive environment determination unit means.~~

2. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, when a plurality of device combinations exist, said adaptive environment determination unit ~~means~~ determines an order of the device combinations under a condition designated in advance, and presents the device combinations in that order.

3. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 2,  
wherein the performance information includes pieces of information on a printing speed, a cost, and a device installation place, and  
wherein said adaptive environment determination unit ~~means~~ determines the order under a condition including any one of the printing speed, the cost, and the device installation place.

4. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein the apparatus further comprises state acquisition means for acquiring a process state of a printing device in use for executing the printing job, and  
wherein said display unit displays ~~process flow presentation means presents~~ a current process status together with the process flow list on the basis of the acquired process state.

5. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein, in the displayed ~~presented~~ process flow list, one of the work ~~working~~ procedures or the process procedures which are in progress or are to be performed next is emphatically displayed to present the current process status.

6. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the process flow list includes a message which prompts checking or replenishment of an expandable used by the ~~printing~~ device as a preparation process.

7. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein the apparatus further comprises a second display unit configured to display means for displaying device combinations capable of executing the printing job so as to be able to select one of the device combinations, and  
wherein said display unit displays a process flow list ~~presentation means presents~~ ~~process flow~~ of the printing process by a device combination selected via said second display unit means.

8. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, when the attribute of the printing job contains color printing, said adaptive environment determination unit means detects monochrome and color pages contained in the printing job, and determines a device combination so as to print the monochrome page by a monochrome printing device.

9. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein the apparatus further comprises a state acquisition unit configured to acquire means for acquiring a device state of a device ~~[[that]]~~ included in the device combination actually used to process the printing job, and

~~wherein said display unit process flow presentation means~~ changes a display state of the process flow list on the basis of the device state acquired by said state acquisition unit ~~means~~.

10. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said ~~display unit process flow presentation means~~ emphatically displays ~~presents~~ a procedure which is in progress or is to be performed by a user out of the displayed presented process flow list.

11. (Previously presented) A printing control method for performing a printing process employing a plurality of ~~printing~~ devices, comprising:

a printing attribute acquisition step of acquiring an attribute of a printing job to be processed;

an adaptive environment determination step of obtaining device combinations capable of executing the printing job based on performance information representing at least performance of each of the plurality of ~~printing~~ devices and the acquired attribute of the printing job; and

a display step of displaying a process flow list representing a process flow to execute the printing job by employing the device combinations, wherein the process flow list is a list in which a plurality of procedures which constitute the printing job are listed in the order of execution, and wherein the plurality of procedures include a process flow presentation step of presenting a process flow required to execute the printing job, wherein the process flow includes work procedures to be performed by a user and process procedures to be performed by respective

~~printing~~ devices included in the device combinations obtained in said adaptive environment  
~~environment~~ determination step.

12. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 11,  
wherein the method further comprises a display step of displaying device  
combinations capable of executing the printing job on a display device means so as to be able to  
select one of the device combinations, and  
wherein, in the process flow presentation step, process flow of the printing job by  
a device combination selected via the display device means is presented.

13. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 11,  
wherein the method further comprises a state acquisition step of acquiring a  
device state of a device that included in the device combination actually used to process the  
printing job, and  
wherein, in the display process flow presentation step, a display state of the  
process flow list is changed on the basis of the device state acquired in the state acquisition step.

14. (Currently amended) A computer-readable medium storing program code for  
causing a computer to execute a method for controlling a printing process employing a plurality  
of printing devices, comprising:  
a printing attribute acquisition step of acquiring an attribute of a printing job to be  
processed;

an adaptive environment determination step of obtaining device combinations capable of executing the printing job based on performance information representing at least performance of each of the plurality of printing devices and the acquired attribute of the printing job; and

a display step of displaying a process flow list representing a process flow to execute the print job by employing the device combinations.

wherein the process flow list is a list in which a plurality of procedures which constitute the printing job are listed in the order of execution, and wherein the plurality of procedures include a process flow presentation step of presenting a process flow required to execute the printing job, wherein the process flow includes work procedures to be performed by a user and process procedures to be performed by respective printing devices included in the device combinations obtained in said adaptive environment determination step.

15. (Currently amended) A computer program product comprising a computer-readable medium having computer code for controlling a printing process employing a plurality of printing devices, said product comprising:

a printing attribute acquisition process procedure code for acquiring an attribute of a printing job to be processed;

an adaptive environment determination process procedure code for obtaining device combinations capable of executing the printing job based on performance information representing at least performance of each of the plurality of printing devices and the acquired attribute of the printing job; and

a display process procedure code for displaying a process flow list representing a process flow to execute the printing job by employing the device combinations,

wherein the process flow list is a list in which a plurality of procedures which constitute the printing job are listed in the order of execution, and wherein the plurality of procedures include ~~a process flow presentation process procedure code for presenting a process flow required to execute the printing job, wherein the process flow includes work procedures to be performed by a user and process procedures to be performed by respective printing devices included in the device combinations obtained by said adaptive environment determination code.~~